

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
BUILDING CODES COMMITTEE

December 19, 2001
Maricopa Association of Governments Office
Saguaro Room
Phoenix, Arizona

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Leon Manuel, Chairman, El Mirage	Crystal Pearl, Mesa
Ken Sowers, Avondale	*Armando Rivas, Paradise Valley
*Mike Tibbett, Carefree	Neil Burning, Peoria
Bob Lee, Cave Creek	Alan Olson, Phoenix
Alex Banachowski, Chandler	*Tim Wegner, Queen Creek
*Patrick Davis, Fountain Hills	Dave Potter, Scottsdale
Ralph Vasquez, Gila Bend	*John Guenther, Surprise
Rocky Fohrenkam for JoRene Deveau, Gila	Michael Williams, Tempe
River Indian Community	Mario Rochin, Tolleson
Ben Cox for Ray Patten, Gilbert	*Skip Blunt, Wickenburg
Deborah Mazoyer, Glendale	Steve Lawton, Youngtown
Steve Burger, Goodyear	*Tom Ewers, Maricopa County
Chuck Ransom, Litchfield Park	Rus Brock, Home Builders Association

*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Pam Wertz, Glendale	Mike Picallo, Southwest Gas
Harry Wolfe, MAG	Fran Smith, Southwest Gas
Robert Palmer, Southwest Gas	

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leon Manuel at 2:05 p.m.

2. Approval of November 14, 2001 Meeting Minutes

Leon Manuel requested comments on the meeting minutes of November 14, 2001.

Bob Lee pointed out that for Item #5, International Residential Code (IRC) Table Revision, that the Winter Design Temperature should have been 34 degrees Farenheit, instead of the 27 degrees Farenheit. He noted that the Table with the 27 degrees Farenheit Winter Design Temperature had been approved and inquired whether we needed the vote again on the Table with the revision.

Harry Wolfe said he thought that perhaps the 27 degrees could be changed to 34 degrees based on a technical adjustment. But he also said that if it needed to be voted on again, he would bring it back to the MAG Building Codes Committee for action.

Rus Brock stated that the comment attributed to him in Item #5, International Residential Code (IRC) Table Revision, "Rus Brock said that Spencer Kamps of the Homebuilders Association said that it (IRC Table) matched what the homebuilders use as an industry." was made in regard to sound attenuation standards in #6. He asked that the statement be deleted from item #5. It is already included in Item #6

Ben Cox stated that the last sentence of Page 2, the word Stactec should be changed to Stantec.

It was moved by Mario Rochin, seconded by Ben Cox and unanimously recommended to approve the meeting minutes of November 14, 2001 as amended.

3. Call to the Public

Leon Manuel asked if there were any requests from members of the public or Committee members to address the Building Codes Committee for non-agenda items.

Crystal Pearl noted that Mesa hosted a successful MAG permit technician forum on November 28, 2001. She noted that a presentation on Historic Preservation was given and that officers of the forum were elected.

Rus Brock asked for assistance from MAG member agencies in filling out a survey on their intentions and schedule for adopting the International Codes. He pointed out that the challenge of the Building industry is dealing with the International Codes Implementation schedule. He said that if everyone adopted the I Codes at the same time, it would impose a tremendous burden on the homebuilders.

Mr. Brock asked if a homebuilder could build-out a subdivision started under a code prior to the IBC without changing its plans.

Bob Lee commented that it would be illegal for a jurisdiction to issue a permit based on a previously approved plan that complied with a different code.

Neil Burning suggested that a potential resolution to the problem would be to ensure that the homebuilders had adequate time to resubmit their plans.

Bob Lee noted that a year ago John Guenther had requested that the Building Codes Committee approve a mission statement and a work program. He said that while the request did not appear to be a high priority item at the time, it is now time to reconsider that. He said that a year ago MAG member agencies agreed to adopt the International Codes effective January 2002. He added that if the mission of MAG is to promote uniformity and consistency, it becomes difficult to achieve this when the jurisdictions use different codes. He said that we needed to think about ideas for arriving at a consensus on what we should be doing.

Steve Burger said he agreed with Bob Lee. He commented that while the Committee members talk about supporting uniformity, when they go back to their jurisdictions they go their own way. He gave as an example the fact that MAG agreed on amendments to the 1999 NEC, but not all the jurisdictions have adopted it.

Ben Cox said that the Building Inspectors/Plans Examiners Forum met and considered two issues:

1. The method of supporting reinforcing steel and separation from earth.
2. With the adoption of the IRC and it's provisions for energy conservation how will we handle plan review and inspection issues.

Mr. Cox said he would be bringing these matters back to the Building Codes Committee in a few months.

Bob Lee indicated that with IRC adoption, we need to consider adopting an energy code enforcement policy.

Leon Manuel pointed out that when a jurisdiction adopted the IBC, it also adopted energy standards as well. He added that all masonry buildings will now require Special Inspections including houses, since the previous UBC allowance for the City to perform various masonry inspections has been eliminated.

Bob Lee added that we may chose to do less than 100% enforcement. He also said that he was more interested in the residential side of energy chapter enforcement.

Steve Burger said that Arizona Chapter of ICBO elected Imad Eldurubai from Willdan, representing the city of Holbrook, Chair; Pam Wertz of Glendale, First Vice Chair, Tim Wegner from the town of Queen creek, second vice chair and Crystal Pearl as Secretary/Treasurer.

4. Request by Southwest Gas Corporation

Leon Manuel reported that Southwest Gas Corporation requested written information from the municipalities on the permitting and clearance requirements the municipalities will place on Southwest Gas when extending exterior, above ground houselines. He said that Southwest Gas Staff wanted to make a presentation to the Building Codes Committee on the issue.

Mr. Robert Palmer explained that it was his goal to establish a working relationship with building officials to reach the common goal of ensuring safety. He explained that there are some instances in which Southwest Gas needs to move a line for safety reasons, and would like to reach agreement with local governments on the conditions in which they would not have to obtain a permit for the relocation. He said that he would like to have something in writing that would indicate the maximum footage that could be relocated without a permit and clearance requirement.

Bob Lee asked Ben Cox whether the Permit Technician and Plans Examiner Forum had discussed this issue. Mr. Cox said the group didn't think that it would be a concern to grant SW Gas some latitude in relocating a line without the need for a permit. Forum members talked about using 6 feet as the maximum footage.

Bob Lee asked what type of test SW Gas performs on the line to determine a safety problem. Bob Palmer

responded that the company does a meter clock test for safety purposes and a liquid leak detection test.

Bob Lee noted that the test would be under operating pressures rather than 15 pounds per square inch.

Alan Olson said that Phoenix had developed some kind of understanding with Southwest Gas, but that he didn't recall a specific Phoenix Code provision on it.

Ben Cox said that each time Southwest Gas comes out they retest the system. While they don't use our standard, they use an acceptable standard.

Mike Picallo said that SW Gas follows industry standards in its testing, but sometimes performs a more sensitive test (drop test) to determine whether a small leak exists.

Mr. Picallo said that Southwest Gas would like to be able to move a line 20 feet without the need for a permit.

Neil Burning asked Mike Picallo if Southwest Gas was requesting this permit exemption when it pertained to residential, low-pressure gas systems only or for any system, regardless of the regulator pressure or building occupancy. Mr. Picallo responded that Southwest Gas wanted the exemption for all gas systems, low, medium and high pressure and for any building occupancy.

Bob Lee said the language in attachment one seems rather limited.

Mike Picallo stated that the intent of the written authorization was to target relocations of a safety concern and that it was not intended for remodeling purposes.

Alan Olson stated that if you are finding situations where a customer initiates a relocation, then a permit is needed; but that if Southwest Gas initiates it, perhaps it is not needed.

Bob Lee asked if there were anyone on the Building Codes Committee that would feel uncomfortable with granting Southwest Gas a maximum of 10 feet for relocating a line for safety purposes without the need for a permit.

Ben Cox said he was not comfortable with a 10 foot minimum. He said it might be acceptable under some conditions but should not be granted Carte Blanch.

Bob Lee suggested modifying the term safety to emergency.

Leon Manuel cautioned about using the wording "owner initiated" in the Southwest Gas form as that may not always be applicable. He gave an example of an emergency inspection he performed after hours, six weeks or so, for a jurisdiction because the hotel guests starting using the hot water heaters and the pool heater more because of the cool weather. He noted that a leak developed at the base of the meter riser and because the meter was too close to the combustion air vents it had to be moved. Mr. Manuel pointed out that the owner did not actually initiate any new work to cause the need for obtaining a permit.

Alan Olson said that he wanted to talk about Phoenix staff about the issue to make sure the maximum foot relocation criteria makes sense.

Steve Lawton pointed out that when the meter was installed that there wasn't a hazardous situation; so that if you now have a hazardous situation it may have been prompted by a change undertaken by the homeowner that required a permit.

He asked whether Southwest Gas would be willing to assume responsibility for an accident if they relocated a line without a permit and clearance.

Mike Picallo said there were a couple of issues here. If a customer installs a hot water heater that is too close to the meter, that either:

1. Southwest Gas asks them to move the heater.
2. Southwest Gas moves the meter

Mike Williams mentioned that in Tempe the criteria for determining whether a permit was needed for a relocation was based upon the number of pieces of pipe and the number of fittings used, rather than the length of the pipe.

It was recommended that Southwest Gas rework the wording of the agreement dealing with the maximum footage of a relocation without the need for a permit and bring it back to the Building Codes committee at the next meeting for further consideration.

Alan Olson stated that the agreement is a working tool to define a gray area. He said it was reasonable to have general agreement with Southwest Gas on the issue. It was also suggested that a caveat be placed in the agreement that if the relocation is being undertaken because of a hazardous situation then the effected jurisdiction be notified of this situation.

Mike Williams said that he agreed with Alan Olson. He said that the draft agreement was a working tool designed to define a gray area. He said that it is reasonable to have general agreement since Southwest Gas. will do this anyway.

5. Impact of SB 1525 on MAG Sound Attenuation Standards

Harry Wolfe reported that at the November 14, 2001 meeting of the MAG Building Codes Committee, MAG staff discussed the impact of SB 1525, passed into law during the last legislative session. The law included some specific standards for the sound attenuation of homes for jurisdictions with land in the vicinity of Luke Air Force Base. It was noted that there were some differences between the standards included in the State legislation and the MAG standards adopted in April 1996. The specific standards related to insulation requirements for exterior walls and for roofs.

Mr. Wolfe noted that he met with the Homebuilders Association and other interested Building Codes officials to review the differences in more detail and that the summary of the major issues raised at that meeting was included in Attachment Two. He added that there was some discussion at the meeting that suggested that it was difficult to meet the R-19 standard for exterior walls, but that Leon Manuel had stated that El Mirage regularly meets the R-19 standard in its Plans.

Leon Manuel, Chair of the Committee, said that he believed that the MAG Building Codes Committee sound insulation standards could remain since they were more comprehensive than what was in the State legislation. He added that the standards go beyond the insulation requirements, and take into account the entire wall assembly and other features of a house. Deborah Mazoyer pointed out that in two instances, however, the MAG standards conflict with the State legislation: The MAG standards allow for R15 and R11 insulation for exterior walls in the 70-75 and 65-70 DNL contours respectively. The state calls for R 19 in everything.

It was noted that since the MAG standards only apply to land within the noise contours, land that is outside the contours but “within the vicinity of a military airport” would be covered by the State legislation.

Debbie Mazoyer pointed out that meeting the R-19 standard using 2X6s is relatively attainable but difficult when using 2X4s. Leon Manuel said that the R-19 can be met with 2X4s.

Steve Burger asked whether the State is trying to achieve an interior noise level of 45 dB.

Rus Brock said that the intent of SB 1525 was to get away from the requirement to perform measurements and establish a performance based standard.

It was noted that Forrest Fielder reported that the noise insulation requirements for the wall assembly was R18.4 or 17.6 depending on the type of construction.

Steve Burger indicated that since the legislation applies to all military airports in the State, that other jurisdictions outside the Phoenix area should be involved in looking at the standard. He also noted that the State law was written to include non-commercial development, while the MAG noise standards only applied to residential development.

6. Update of the Regional Plan Review Program

Neil Burning reported that the Regional Plan Review program was almost complete. He said that there are eight jurisdictions participating in the program at this time, including: Avondale, Cave Creek, El Mirage, Gilbert, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Peoria and Surprise. He mentioned that Glendale has to wait at this time, but plans to be part of the group in the very near future.

Mr. Burning said that all jurisdictions will have adopted the 2000 International Building Code, 2000 International Residential Code, 2000 International Mechanical Code, 1999 National Electrical Code and the Arizona Uniform Plumbing Code, effective March 1, 2002.

7. Legislative Issues

There was no discussion of any legislative issues.

8. Plumbing Code Commission

Steve Burger provided a status report on the State Plumbing Commission. He noted that at the last meeting on December 13, the Commission voted 8-7 to accept the code change submittal that substitutes the International

Plumbing Code and the International Fuel Gas Code for the 1994 UPC. This submittal will need to be run through the regulatory process and then on to the Governor's Regulatory Review Council (GRRC).

9. Updated MAG Building Codes Committee Membership

Harry Wolfe noted that an updated membership roster for the MAG Building Codes Committee was included in Attachment Three and that if there were any changes to the list, to notify him.

10. Topics for Future Agendas

Potential topics for the next meeting included: a presentation on Dust Control rules by Mr. Larry Spivack of Maricopa County Environmental Services; Mechanical Code Issues with the School Facilities Management Program; a status report on the Impact of S.B. 1525 on the MAG Sound Attenuation Standards.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.